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ABSTRACT

This practicum project used organized professional development to increase involvement of teachers at a preK-8 school in the school's reform process. All members of the school community actively participated in planning, data collecting, and sharing of pertinent reform information. The 3-month staff development intervention consisted of three phases: (1) meetings with stakeholders, including teachers; (2) professional development programs comprised of seven training workshops that covered infusion of technology, context of learning, multicultural values, parental involvement, whole-language instruction, continuous progress, and responsive classroom techniques, with teachers collaborating on workshop planning and presenting; and (3) professional development activities, such as receiving administrative leave to visit neighboring schools engaged in similar reform efforts. Data on teacher involvement were collected through journal entries, checklists, on-site observations, and surveys. Findings indicated that at the end of the 3-month intervention, the number of dissatisfied teachers was reduced, more teachers were participating in the change process, over half the teachers were implementing the new techniques and strategies, and teachers were more involved in the reform effort. (Three appendices contain forms used in the study. Contains 31 references.) (KDFB)

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Pre-Kindergarten to Eighth Grade Teachers Become Change Agents Through Active Participation in School Reform

by
Andriana Kalapothakos
Cluster 71

A Practicum I Report Presented to
the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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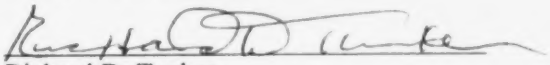
Verifier: 
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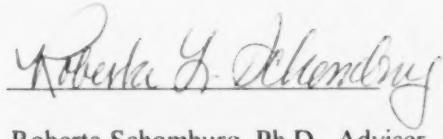
Roberta Schomburg, Ph.D., Adviser

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Abstract

Pre-Kindergarten to Eighth Grade Teachers Became Change Agents Through Active Participation in School Reform. Kalapothakos, Andriana, 1996: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program In Child and Youth Studies. Professional Development/Inservice training/Teacher as Researcher/Team Building/Collaborative School Reform

This practicum was designed to increase teacher involvement in school change process through the organized professional development. The writer's model involved active participation of all members of the school community in planning, data collecting, and sharing of pertinent reform information. The close collaboration of the school community disclosed the needs for programmatic change. The writer documented increase in teacher involvement from journal entries, checklists, on-site observations and responses to surveys.

The writer developed an inclusive professional development plan aimed at increasing teacher involvement. The guidelines and activities designed promoted growth in participation and interest. The information of the practicum was shared with the school administration and collegial associate teacher of the school.

The outcomes of the practicum were very encouraging. Uninvolved teachers empowered through professional development programs became strong change agents. The writer's invitation brought members of the school community together providing collaboration and support for the necessary changes. Teachers through involvement demonstrated a new acceptance for change, and a transition from dissatisfaction to satisfaction

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Chapter I

Introduction

Description of the Writer's Work Setting

The writer's work setting was a Community School located in a large urban city. The building was relatively modern in design, open-spaced in structure. It served a socio-economically mixed population in the upper northwest quarter of the city. The school served grades Pre-Kindergarten through 8th, with an incorporated, parent-funded nursery school and before and after school care program. It had a recreational center shared with the Department of Recreation and a community school component. The school's population was 557.

The population of the school was culturally diverse with the dominant population being African-American. The school implemented School-Based Management as part of its restructuring process. The Local School Restructuring Team adopted the Effective School Model empowering its school staff and community creating conditions facilitating improvements, innovations, and continuous professional growth. There was a great impetus for the establishment of urban learner programs, based on the results of a staff and community needs assessment. The programs established delegate authority and flexibility to the school staff in terms of curriculum design and choice of instructional strategies. The school's entire student body consisted of four instructional teams and one resource support team.

The school setting consisted of six departments. The Administrative component of the school consisted of one Principal, one Assistant Principal, two Counselors, one

Administrative secretary, two clerks, and a part time nurse. The teaching staff consisted of twenty-eight classroom teachers, two special education teachers, one ESL teacher, two Physical Education teachers, one Music teacher, one Librarian, a part-time Speech therapist, and three content area specialists (science, reading, and math). In addition to the instructional and administrative staff, other personnel met the needs of the student body. The school employs cafeteria workers, two security guards, an engineer, and six maintenance personnel. The school prided itself for its immaculate appearance. It received city recognition for two consecutive years for excellent maintenance and care of its physical plant. This of course added to the pleasant environment for students, parents, and staff.

The writer's school engaged in community partnerships with the local Army hospital, a local bank, the Urban League, Super Saver Program, Safeway and Giant stores, Pizza Hut, McDonald's and the Association of Black social Workers. Several Metropolitan Area Churches also served needs of the students by providing tutoring services, and instructional programs. In addition to these community partnerships, the school enjoyed the active participation of the Parent Teacher's Association. The parents planned viable programs both inter-school and extracurricular, enhancing the learning programs for the students. They assisted as aides in classrooms, on field trips, fund raising activities. They actively participated in the School Based Management program. The Parent Teacher's Association had two parents and two community members sitting as active members on the School's Local School Restructuring Team. They worked in close coordination with

the instructional and administrative staff in the design and implementation of new programs benefiting the children's academic, physical, and emotional needs.

The school had a strong relationship with the neighborhood Public Library. Teachers enjoyed privileges for borrowing books. Availability of resource material and special instructional programs benefited the learners. Literacy programs for all levels of learners were just one facet of the school's ties with the Public Library. Children visited the library weekly and received training in the selection of literature, and preparation of research papers. The librarians communicated with administration and staff and kept abreast of current needs.

The school was a member of a very concerned and active local community. Community representatives retained seats on the Local School Restructuring Team. Many attended the Parent Teacher's Association meetings, keeping abreast of educational issues. Others volunteered time to the school as tutors, assistants, and fund-raisers. The Fire Department and Police Department participated in teaching programs regarding law enforcement and personal safety guidelines. These programs reinforced positive values in students living in environments plagued with social ills.

The School Profile Data supported the writer's view that the staff of the school engage itself in on-going professional development. A total of 35 individuals dealt with student instruction. They held a variety of academic degrees: 3 hold a Bachelor's Degree, 18 a Master's, 13 a Master's plus 30, and 1 a Doctoral degree. The building tenure of over half of the staff was 10-15 years. Eight staff members served over 15 years. This data indicated strong dedication to their professions, and a strong commitment to the school. The

school's student academic performance profile also shared positive results. The attendance rate at the school in l993 was 94%. The promotion rate of the entire student body was 99.4% (Local School Restructuring Plan, 1994). The CTBS (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills) scores indicated average to above average performance in the areas of Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Language Arts.

The writer's school accepted the mission set by its District that stated, "To provide a quality student-centered environment that fosters maximum learning by each student, enabling each to enjoy continuous learning while becoming a productive, global citizen" (Local School Restructuring Plan, 1995, p.7). The vision of the school was, "Come Grow With Me, The Best Is Yet to Be" (LSRT, 1995, p. 7). The mission and vision served as guides for every professional development plan. Each activity designed enhanced the opportunities of the learner to excel and prepare meeting the challenges of his future.

The writer listed the School District's mandated curricular and strategic reform programs identified as crucial for the school population. These were:

- Context of Learning
- Multi Cultural Education
- Values Education
- Responsive Classroom
- Reading Comprehension
- Math, Science and Technology Integration
- Computer Technology
- Critical Thinking Skills and Problem Solving

- Continuous Progress program of assessment (grades Pre-Kgn -- 3rd)

The purpose and philosophy of the school focused on the immediate need of the learners. The program design and implementation considered the views of every Community stakeholder. The school was the most important component of the Community, and its academic and social environments concerned the Administrators, Teachers, Parents, Politicians, Community Members, and of course the main consumer, the students.

Writer's Role in the Work Setting

The writer was a certified full time Kindergarten teacher in the school. She was part of the Red Team that consisted of three Kindergarten classes and two Pre-Kindergarten classes. The urban school focused on the Urban Learner and his needs. The writer's class consisted of 21 students, 20 of African American descent, and one Caucasian from Madagascar. All the students were English-speaking. The writer implemented the mandated programs of the District mentioned in the Introduction. She used a transdisciplinary curricular approach in her instructional delivery with a definite infusion of technology and multicultural values. The majority of the classroom population was African-American thus calling for the main cultural focus to be Afro-centric. The writer taught the multicultural program placing major emphasis on the children's cultural heritage and traditions. The curriculum served as a catalyst for growth in self-esteem, recognition of cultural diversity, and importance of a globally interdependent society. She based the lesson plans on a literature based, thematic approach using the strategies of Whole Language and Emergent Literacy. All the content areas wove around the literature focusing on an exciting and complete learner-centered and teacher-facilitated program

As a concerned and active member of her work community the writer served on many committees and planning programs. She was a member of the District's Curriculum Coordinating Council and Renewal Team. She served as the Curriculum Resource teacher for her team. The school staff elected her for a fourth term on the Local School Restructuring Team, on which she served as Secretary. She also served as Corresponding Secretary to the Executive Council of the Parent Teacher's Association. The writer actively worked on many of the District's efforts promoting School Reform and Goals 2000. She was also a member of the District's Standard Writing Team representing the English, Language Arts branch of learning. In addition to the many roles already described, the writer assumed the responsibility of chairing the Staff Development Committee of her school. Other committees on which she actively participated were the SCAC (Local School Union Bargaining Organization), Health, Cultural Diversity, Public Relations and Media Committees. Her interest and love for educational endeavors were unending, and her dedication to the learner was a source of enjoyment and leisure rather than just a professional role.

The writer believed that curriculum and instruction connected to the cultural experiences and values of the learners. She promoted fair and un-biased assessment and uses high standards as her basis of student expectation. In the development of her programs, she strongly considered the developmental and individual needs of every learner. Her role as a teacher and facilitator in her school and district reflected a respect for self-esteem and individual values. Her ultimate goal was success for every learner no

matter what his background may be. Her enthusiasm and skill enticed her to share her wealth of knowledge and information in the hope that other educators would benefit.

The writer was a member of the present work setting for six years. Prior to this she taught and principled for a period of 18 years at a Parochial School also located in the Urban area. Over a long 24 years the writer's experiences encompassed many educational experiences. Some of these were teaching foreign language to elementary age children, Byzantine Music, Early Childhood multi-age groups, Kindergarten bilingual settings, English as a Second Language class and Greek Folk Dancing. The writer also participated in the development and implementation of integrated content curricula. The wealth of knowledge gained from these long and rich years she shared with her colleagues on a daily basis. The writer enjoyed peer coaching and participation in seminars and workshops for her District.

The writer considered herself an educator at heart, and concerned herself with the betterment of the educational programs of her school setting.

Chapter II

Writer's Focus on the Problem

Identification of the Problem

The writer's school provided on-going professional development for both instructional and non-instructional staff. Its mission and vision called for top-quality service for students and parents, because they were the clients. In order to guarantee this superior service, District representatives and School Administrators evaluated the staff development programs and made specific recommendations for improvements.

The evaluation team found that training and classes existed for the staff, but program implementation rated low on a scoring rubric. The District introduced several new reform movements within a short period of time (2 years). Teachers bought into the new programs without participating in the decision making processes related to their adoption. These programs were:

1. Responsive Classroom - An innovative program improving the social attitudes of the students. The program involved environmental changes, focused on Developmentally Appropriate Practices, behavior management alterations, and instructional strategy changes.
2. Continuous Progress - A program that changed the assessment and evaluation process for grades Pre-Kindergarten through third. There was no student retention, and assessment was authentic. The authentic assessment methods included portfolio collection, observations, checklists, and periodic written reports.

3. Thematic Approach for Reading and Language Arts - Teachers in grades Kindergarten through sixth used textbooks by Houghton Mifflin Book Company. This was a Systemic mandate. The strategies were Whole Language Approach and the Emergent Literacy Strategy.
4. Thematic Approach for Mathematics using Houghton Mifflin Books was a requirement for all Kindergarten through sixth graders. Teachers incorporated math with the reading and language arts, and also used hands-on experiential manipulatives.
5. Introduction to Performance Based Education and Standards - This was a reform movement instituted by the District for all of its schools. Teachers were asked to conform to the learning outcomes of the system, use standards as guides, and practice classroom instruction and assessment according to the Outcomes Based Theories.

The above mandated reforms introduced within a two year period expected teachers to change their ways of thinking, acting, and teaching.

Teachers in the school were uninvolved in the change process. The teaching staff enjoyed a long relationship with the traditional modalities of teaching. Of 35 teachers 25 had over a ten year tenure in the building (Data from Local School Restructuring Plan, 1994). They were comfortable and secure with the strategies of the old CBC (Competency Based Curriculum) and found no reason for change. A desire for comfort led teachers away from active participation and involvement in innovative reform movements.

Documentation of the Problem

The writer identified the need for active participation of teachers through thorough documentation. The documentation included the dissemination of surveys, collection of information from team and staff meetings, and recordings in a log of discussions and on-site observations. The School Administration disseminated a specific needs assessment survey to all staff. The survey designed by School Administration using a model of the District was the tool of assessment. Of 35 surveys disseminated only 3 returned to the evaluator within the two week period.

Due to the poor return of surveys the writer and members of the Local School Restructuring Team collected documentation through meetings with team leaders, individual teachers, and through on-site visits to classes. The notations from on-site visits indicated high non-involvement of teachers in the implementation of strategies and innovations presented to the schools through District mandate. The writer documented this observation as she observed classes in session, evidence of portfolio assessment, samples of student work on bulletin boards, and actual lesson plan designs. She compared the actual classroom environments and teaching strategies with those in the newly structured District Framework.

Evidence from Documentations

The writer disseminated a survey to 35 staff members on behalf of the School Administration attempting identification of the areas of need related to Staff Development and Training. Due to the fact that only three surveys returned further evidence collection

followed. The writer and members of the Local School Restructuring Team proceeded in their efforts collecting minutes and notes from team and general staff meetings. They also participated in actual on-site visits to the classrooms, and discussions with individual staff members. The discussions with staff members related to the identical concerns listed on the Staff Development Survey. Every Area discussed related to the school's Improvement Outcomes mandated by the District. The discussions took place in an informal setting lasting for a period of 15 minutes. Discussions with teachers took place at the teacher's convenience.

The writer's on-site observations and records indicated that dissatisfaction and complaints were evident in 9 out of 10 discussions with staff members. The writer listed the evidence collected from the on-site evaluations and discussions:

- Teachers desired involvement in the development of programs and strategies maximizing student-staff potential.
- Teachers desired active involvement in the staff development process.
- To effectively promote school change teachers identified as a major need the development of collegiality and consensus building among staff.
- Extreme frustration demonstrated about little release time for attending workshops.
- Teachers claimed that the introduction of too many reforms resulted in non-involvement at implementation stage.
- Cut backs in personnel due to budget problems in System made it even more difficult for teacher release time.

The writer and members of the Local Restructuring Team observed and noted that only l out of 4 teachers involved themselves in school reform. This was evidence that improvement must be made for expected successful reform implementation. Attendance of the writer at team meetings chaired by the Collegial Associate Teacher produced evidence that teachers demonstrated strong dissatisfaction regarding the initiated changes. According to the surveys, class observations, and discussions, teachers implemented change, but were not directly involved with the actual change process. Non-involvement promotes resistance and hesitancy towards implementation of innovative school reforms.

In order to comprehend all the proposed initiated changes and reforms for teachers in grades Pre-Kindergarten through eighth, the writer attended meetings of the District's Coordinating Council and Standards Reform Movement. The teachers in the writer's school expressed strong concerns regarding the move from the Competency Based Curriculum to a Performance Based Education format. The necessary training and change in classroom organization were time consuming and difficult to implement according to the staff. Their satisfaction with the past curriculum and traditional teaching modalities resulted in an increase of non-involvement, and decrease in productivity using new methods.

The final evidence collected by the writer is the Plan of Operation of the Local School Restructuring Team for 1993-1994 (Local School Restructuring Plan, 1994). The writer referred to a plan of operation set in October 1993. It contained a timeline listing a series of proposed activities related to the systemic changes and curricular framework. On the designated target date, June 1994, only 9 of the 34 designated activities actualized. The

actualization of these activities depended on teacher involvement and collaboration. The writer identified the need for increased teacher involvement as crucial for improvement in attaining the mission and vision of the school as identified by the Local School Restructuring Team.

Analysis of the Causes

The writer considered the need for teacher involvement in school change. She proceeded with an analysis of the evidence collected. This analysis identified the causes responsible for the non-involvement of teachers in reform movements. The writer conducted interviews and reviewed the few surveys returned. The writer noted that professional developments provided were insufficient and inadequate to the immediate needs. Teachers felt that for each change their requirement of attending two to three crash courses, or a week-long workshop was inadequate preparation for immediate implementation. Their voiced concerns at meetings focused on little time awarded for mentoring, peer collaboration, or expression of teacher's feelings regarding the reforms. Increased cut backs in support staff made it impossible for scheduling staff professional development sessions in adequate time blocks. A reform mandated by the District required teachers are to change their ways moving in a new direction. The teachers agreed that a need for change was imminent. They stated that change was necessary and beneficial for the students, but they reminded the District that their professional needs and values also warranted consideration.

Documentation indicated that all 35 teachers voiced concern because their participation in the planning stages of change movements was not evident. Teachers joined in the

change process after initial plans were already in process. At this point, they were implementing programs that they did not understand or support, leading to non-involvement in the process.

There was a plethora of material disseminated in a school year to teachers. In their mail boxes they received journal articles and written matter about programs or proposed changes. Every teacher agreed that most of the material had some value to it, but there was no time to read and assimilate the material. Teachers lacked the chance of voicing agreement or disagreement to the changes. Teachers became anxious and overburdened.

The writer's review of the evidence and description of causes related to uninvolved teachers led her to a final statement tying teacher non-involvement to poor implementation of new programs and reforms. Poor participation of staff in the scope and purpose of reforms or new programs led to an increase in the chances of unsuccessful implementation. The above causes reflected poor participation in the reform process at the school and without improvement the success of new programs would be jeopardized.

Literature Review Related to the Problem

Educators and scholars write about the growing problem of teacher apathy, and non-involvement related to school change and reform. Quaglia and Brown (1994) discuss the issue of school change and its problems in their article, "The Three Phases of Change." They emphasize the fact that uninvolved staff in a school's decisions cannot collaboratively understand and succeed in their endeavors. In their article they make it known that empowered staff members have tendencies of becoming acclimated and responsible in the reform movements. According to Maeroff (1993) there is an underestimation of teachers

as professional members of the community. Society refers to teachers separately from members of the community of learners, although learning is the greatest part of their world. Teachers are perpetual learners in one of Maeroff's interpretations. Maeroff (1993) emphasizes that teacher involvement in the working community is important and vital to the welfare of the school environment.

Maeroff (1993) writes that most changes take place in the summer months when school is not in session. In his book Team Building for School Change (p 28-29) Maeroff discusses that changes frequently take place in the summer months when teachers are away and have no opportunity to share in the process. Problems thereby escalate through misinformation and lack of communication, leading to non-involvement when the actual implementation takes place.

Harvey and Drolet, (1994) address the problem of uninvolved teachers from another aspect. They state that by telling teachers what to do rather than asking the process of successful implementation slows. Harvey and Drolet, (1994) recommend collaborating with the staff bringing about quicker and more enthusiastic results.

Time is of prime essence. In education time has a frame. It follows a definite schedule designed by administration or the District. The teacher must follow her time schedule on a daily basis, yet she must meet all the requirements of the programs introduced. O'Neill (1995) touches upon this problem of time. He speaks of the time imposed on teachers for learning new strategies and programs, and then actually implementing them in the classroom. His feeling is that teachers feel stressed conforming to new strategies, beliefs and philosophies that others impose upon them in short periods of time.

Massy, Wilger, and Colbeck (1994) also make reference to the little time that faculty has for communication and collaboration purposes. In their article they note that time is the primary factor preventing interaction and collegiality among fellow colleagues.

O'Neill (l995) discusses the problem of time and uninvolved teachers in the process of change. He also stresses the time factor as an integral obstacle to teacher involvement in the success of new programs. He cites examples of teachers receiving notification on Monday about a workshop on Tuesday. Then on Wednesday they must return to the school and share the information with others, moving toward implementation. In one short session there is distribution of bundles of papers, filling out of charts, and drill and practice of activities. The teachers anxiously practice on one-another hoping that mastery of the new idea transpires. The obstacle of too little time to absorb and assimilate is a major issue. Time according to O' Neill (1995) identifies with collaboration and collegiality that ultimately lead to involved teachers in the change process.

Promotion of teacher collaboration around the Country is an issue the literature connects to teacher participation. O' Neill (1995) in one of his journal articles illustrates the problem of teachers closed in their own rooms functioning as individuals or as is commonly stated, "doing their own thing" (O'Neill, 1995). Again, O' Neill identifies time and peer collaboration as necessary components for teacher involvement in the school reform processes.

NAEYC adds one more factor to the equation of teacher non-participation. They refer to teacher's comfort zones and school reform. In the NAEYC article teachers teach in ways they are comfortable teaching, not in ways that are appropriate for the children

(NAEYC, 1990). The reference made by NAEYC corresponds directly to teacher non-involvement in change process. Teachers collaborating and learning new methods and strategies become comfortable with their use and transfer this success to their classroom experiences.

Teachers need to play an active role in the evaluation and improvement of teaching. The President of the AAHE (American Association of Higher Education) states this in one of his articles. Members of the AAHE support that non- participation of teachers in the evaluation of educational issues brings about resistance and apathy as pedagogical changes take place (AAHE, 1994).

In one study Levine (l991) documents problems arising during implementation of new reform movements due to teacher ignorance. He implies that a firm understanding of the reasons for the change need clarification as a foundation for the actual success of the program. Levine believes that teacher awareness is a significant prerequisite to involvement. If teachers comprehend the need for change, they proceed with a clear purpose. Levine's clarification of need serves as the purpose for active participation of staff.

Levine's (l991) research relates acceptance of change to knowledge of its basic contents. The school buys into a reform movement asking its staff to follow. The problems arise as the staff proceeds in training without any basic knowledge of the change contents. The instructional plan regarding change does not include preliminary training, therefore making teachers feel frustrated, tired, and unwilling to participate.

Levine (1991) also refers to non-participation of staff as he reveals a non-balance between the school level and the central administration level. He makes a point of reference related to central office decisions relayed as mandates to the local school. Teachers and faculty feel a discomfort when these decisions impact them without their input and consideration. They consider themselves the experts who never find opportunity for sharing the expertise.

The Pueblo Colorado Standards in the Abstract (1995) cite another important example on the importance of professional development and the reform movement. The abstract clearly states that a total participation of all stakeholders is of vital importance to the successful buy-in of educational systemic change and reform. According to the Colorado Standards document (1995) and Levine (1991) understanding and buying into the mandated reforms through collaborative effort and ownership for the programs is a prime pre-requisite to teacher satisfaction and involvement.

In making education the prime issue of importance, the writer's School District lists certain characteristics of a quality workforce in their Goals 2000 documents. The writer used a portion of this document in support of her stand on intense and consistent professional development. The document emphasizes the following important reasons for addressing the writer's problem of uninvolved teachers in the change process.

- Low self-esteem and morale of the Teacher
- Lack of a Career-Ladder Program
- Outdated certification process
- Inconsistent Assessment and Evaluation process

- Teachers do not understand the standards imposed upon them.
- Inadequate professional development opportunities for the staff (DC Public School Reform Movement, 1995).

The writer's literature review validated the necessity for improvement of teacher involvement in the change process. Frustration and lack of communication documented by Quaglia and Maeroff (1994) are common terms throughout the literature related to teacher participation in school reform movements. The literature suggests that the problem of non-involved teachers in the change process is one of magnitude and complexity, needing immediate attention.

Chapter III

Outcomes, Evaluation Tools, and Standard of Achievement

Writer's Goals and Expectations

At the completion of this practicum the writer's goal of involving teachers as active participants in the change processes of the school became reality. Teachers and staff members through engagement in on-going and intense professional development opportunities shared in the decision making process. Their participation increased chances for successful reform implementation.

Writer's Expected Outcomes

The writer projected achievement of expected practicum outcomes over a three month designated period. Active teacher involvement in decision making processes will lead to a decrease in dissatisfaction and complaints, and increase in reform implementation. The following outcomes were projected for this practicum:

1. Ongoing observations and discussions will indicate that dissatisfaction and complaints will decrease from 9 out of 10 incidence to only 5 out of 10.
2. Minutes from meetings and open forums will indicate that one out of two teachers are now participating in the change process in comparison to one out of four cited in the evidence.
3. The results of the final survey will indicate increase in satisfaction and participation and evidence of decrease of dissatisfaction and resistance. The expectation is that one out of two teachers will participate in the implementation of new techniques and strategies.

4. Documentation of teacher and staff involvement in Local School Restructuring Team efforts will indicate growth in interest and participation. She predicts that 30 out of 35 surveys disseminated at the conclusion of the practicum will return in comparison to the 3 out of 35 in the beginning.

Evaluation Tool

The writer selected a variety of tools for evaluating the success of her practicum. The purpose of these tools was: (a) To provide feedback from teachers, administrators, parents and community members. (b) To document conversations held in small and large groups with the school's stakeholders. (c) To document changes in needs and attitudes related to school reform initiatives. (d) To document information from Local School Restructuring, SCAC, and Team meetings related to acceptance of school reform. The tools used determined the realization of the practicum objectives and goals.

The writer chose the selected tools after careful consideration of the causes and evidence related to her problem. She selected data collection strategies that would be most beneficial in understanding the relevant topics and areas of concern.

Standard of Achievement

The writer's standard of achievement was the expected outcome of the proposed new staff development program. The writer looked for a decrease of dissatisfaction and complaints over a three month period enabling two out of five reforms to reach the implementation stage. During this three month period one out of two teachers were expected to become involved with the new reforms. The involvement of one out of two teachers would transpire in the implementation of the new reform.

Procedure for Measuring the Outcomes

The Local School Restructuring Team played an important role in the collection of data, and measuring of the results. These members served as liaisons for the staff members. They worked with the writer disseminating information, surveys, doing interviews and conducting on-site visits. Their notes and documentations became a part of the data collection. The writer and the team reviewed the information, evaluated the findings, and measured the levels of success as the professional development project proceeded.

The surveys, questionnaires, interviews and observations were part of the formative evaluation. The summative evaluation took place in the last weeks of the three month period. It involved a complete and detailed evaluation of the professional development program, and its outcomes. Comparisons of all surveys and documentations served as measures in drawing conclusions about the success of the program.

The writer used the evaluative tools of her District and Local School Restructuring Team as her measures. The writer based the reliability of these tools on their successful use in the District. In selecting the tools the writer considered her population, their time constraints and feelings. Each tool selected collected necessary data in a non-threatening and non-judgmental manner. The writer's tool selection included:

- Documentation of discussions with staff -- both large and small group
- Surveys disseminated to teachers three times during the three month implementation period.

- Documentation in a log noted changes in attitudes at meetings, in classrooms, and at work sessions.
- The writer collected minutes from all Local School Restructuring, SCAC (Local Union Bargaining Organization) and Team meetings. The notes documented changes in attitudes and needs related to acceptance of school reform.

The variety of evaluative tools used by the writer produced support of evidence regarding non-involved teachers in school reform movements.

Chapter IV

Solution Strategy

The Writer's Search for a Solution

The writer researched possible solutions regarding the problem of uninvolved teachers in school reforms. The extensive research and field work in the search for answers provided the writer with information that was interesting as well as helpful in solving her problem.

Jacobs (l995) advises that there needs to be an allowance for adequate planning time and team collaboration if curriculum decisions become a part of the teacher's job description. The proposed additional time is for assimilation of material, and opportunity to use resources constructively. Jacobs emphasizes that the additional time for reading journals and searching for information on a particular theme also gives teachers the time for adjustment to new methods or strategies. The assimilation of material and use of the resources leads to participation and collaboration in the school's curricular decisions.

Stager (1995) also makes reference to the need for collaboration and time for learning. He expresses concerns related to professional development programs created on the spur of the moment, and implemented without strategic planning. He cites examples of teachers being taught to start a computer, a printer, and insert a piece of software, but never learning how to transfer what they learned to the actual classroom arena. Stager suggests close collaboration between peers both in the classroom and out, and actual participation in the student programs.

Dilworth and Imig (1995) reemphasize the importance of teachers comprehending content of the courses taught in their classrooms. Their involvement in the learning process equips them for the changes in their professional roles. For teachers to be prepared in meeting demands of students, parents, and society they must involve themselves with every facet of educational change whether it be knowledge or skill based.

The importance of collaboration and close work is the focus of Barth (1991) as he discusses reform movements and local school restructuring efforts. Barth emphasizes the close collaboration of teachers world-wide as they train to undertake program expansions and new educational developments in their schools. In every example, school leaders encourage extensive teacher involvement in the change process, encouraging collective growth and successful implementation.

The innovative technological reforms in Australia described by Stager (1995) speak of teachers working with teachers, empowering each other, and sharing in the actual program development and implementation. In Stager's model there is respect and value for teacher's ideas. The connections made between staff members at professional development programs spread to the classroom encompassing the children with enthusiasm and motivation.

Stager's model (1995) is an example of teachers moving away from low self-esteem and frustration toward sharing of good team work. Stager's model provides ideas on teacher empowerment, collegiality, and respect for peer mentoring. Stager strongly encourages teacher teaching teacher.

Peter Senge (1990) interestingly speaks about the "learning organization" as he calls it. He identifies teachers as a part of this organization, emphasizing the importance of their participation in its success and growth. Senge encourages teacher participation and involvement in every aspect of the school's management and growth. He welcomes teachers as an integral part of the successful development of the community. This is an important part of the School Based Management process.

Repeatedly, the writer read about inclusion of teachers in the implementation process. Maeroff (1993) discusses in his articles the importance of teachers joining together if their professional roles are to grow through inclusion in the decision making factors related to school matters. Maeroff describes success of school reforms overseen by classroom teachers. He speaks of teachers involved in the design of new programs, actual implementation of the plan, and joint efforts in evaluating outcomes of the reforms. Maeroff demonstrates one phase of teachers participating in school based management. The collegiality and bonding of teachers serve as an indicator of the strong involvement required for success of reform movements.

Teacher isolationism is the focus of the ERIC document by Abdal-Haqq-Ismat (1992). He discusses the professionalism of a teacher, and how it differs from that of any other profession. He writes about hard-working teachers that do not participate in the development of programs outside their classrooms. His solution is a development of a professional development school. At these schools teachers share their missions, experiences and expand their knowledge. Through this sharing experience, their self-

esteem and confidence in their profession grows enabling them to move from the isolationist to the activist stage.

Maeroff (1993) supports the views of teachers complaining about tight schedules, lack of planning time, and too much paper work. In his literature he reiterates the importance of allowing teachers time for sharing new ideas, team planning, or reading the journals and literature related to innovative educational theories and ideas.

O'Neill (1995) addresses the issues of collaboration, learning, and sharing from one another. Staff members participating in teams enhance classroom instruction and success. Team participation is a necessary element for successful change according to O'Neill (1995), Maeroff (1993), and Barth (1991).

Educators conveyed the same message in journals, articles, and at workshops as they referred to teacher professional development. It is important for teachers to understand the changes by sharing in the workplace, thereby lessening the chance of unsuccessful implementation. (Saranson, 1990). Teachers resented the many reforms introduced in short periods of time using crash courses, and one day workshops moving teachers into implementation.

At a National Conference, facilitators of the Sylvan Organization described a staff development model guaranteeing on-going communication and a variety of learning experiences introduced in school programs. The Sylvan Plan contains ideas worth adopting in a professional development plan. The ideas proposed relate directly to active teacher involvement. The most important components of the Sylvan training model are:

- Lecture sessions

- Small and large group interactions and discussions
- Role play opportunities
- Hands-on activities
- Independent reading time allowed
- Use of On-line and Telecommunications resources (Sylvan Plan, 1995)

The literature review emphasized the importance of including teachers in every aspect of change. Every author, facilitator, speaker, and interviewee expressed the need for collaboration, peer work, team effort, and allowance for time. The writer referred to a statement by Mary Renck Jalongo (1992). She encourages sharing amongst educators because the experience gives greater insight into practice, and at the same time contributes to others in the field.

Through intense literature review the writer comprehended the scope and breadth of the problem of teacher non-involvement in school reform. Through this understanding, she proceeded with the design of a comprehensive and effective professional development plan enhancing teacher participation and active involvement in the school's programs.

The Writer's Proposed Solutions

The writer's designed solution strategy impacted teacher involvement in school reform by:

- Development of teacher training programs that were on-going providing opportunities for collaboration, and active participation as suggested by Maeroff (1993).
- Involving the entire staff in the needs assessment of the school.
- Allowed teachers' participation in schedule changing.

- Allotted adequate planning and team collaboration time.
- Offered substantial training for all staff in school based management techniques.
- Offered professional growth programs as suggested by Barth (1991) in terms of program expansion and resource development for the school.

The writer based the professional staff development plan on theories encouraging collaborative team work. Her proposed plan started with the design of a strategic plan. All stakeholders of the school family attended a meeting. Each group elected representatives for the Professional Development team. The Local School Restructuring Team served as the overseer of the entire plan. The writer's main idea was total school involvement for successful acceptance of changes. The strategic plan included specific timelines that each group of stakeholders followed. The final model entitled Let's Work Together took the problem components of resistance, apathy, and dissatisfaction and turned them around to collaboration, interest, and satisfaction. The Let's Work Together staff development model encouraged collaboration of staff with others in neighboring schools. The team collaborated and noted ideas for adoption. The writer incorporated the ideas into the Local School Restructuring Plan. The writer included parents and community members into the adoption of the school plan. Through the interaction of staff, administration, parents and community the problem of non-involvement diminished, and success of proposed plans increased. Interactive work and decision making were major components of the writer's solution strategy.

The proposed staff development model involved all members in the school community in the sharing of ideas and leadership toward a proposed successful implementation of

change. Collection of data through a needs assessment survey was the first step in the writer's plan and its purpose was prioritization of issues relevant to the school community. The writer's solution strategy involved joint administration-teacher efforts bringing about positive changes in the School's Local Restructuring Improvement Plan. Teachers with administrative assistance involved themselves in the assessment of building needs. They shared ideas, and served as members of the planning committees. Through active participation, staff practices School Based Management Governance recently adopted by the school. The writer considered participation in planning and decision making an important part of her solution strategy, because inviting people to participate entices them to demonstrate interest and involvement.

The solution plan awarded all members of the school community the opportunity for choice. The surveys and needs assessments collected from all members of the school community became a tool of assessment by the writer. Everyone received an opportunity for voicing their likes, dislikes, and concerns. The writer proposed the use of written and oral interviews therefore all stakeholders shared in choosing how they wished to express their views. Data collection and analysis took place. Following this process, staff members studied crucial reform movements. Choice became the writer's tool for creating comfort and enthusiasm in the reform movement.

Another solution strategy for assisting change included additional release time for staff to participate in training and hands-on experiences. The writer envisioned that administration and staff would work collaboratively designing schedules that would allow

teachers time for team work. Some of the probable solutions for the time element included:

- Block periods of planning time for each team
- Use of instructional aides as assistants during staff development times
- Involvement of parents in the classroom as teachers explore new strategies
- Scheduling of group activities for students enabling teachers cooperative work periods.

In the development of Let's Work Together the writer carefully considered the results of the data collection, and the works of other educators. She selected ideas and developed concepts that were realistic and within her powerbase. Her focus on School-Based Management matched the focus that Sirotnik and Clark (1988) placed on their model. They emphasize the importance of strong teacher involvement in decision making regarding school programs. The writer placed great emphasis on teachers' acquisition of base knowledge regarding issues impacting the District and the immediate classroom environment. The writer in her solution strategy considered this an important asset to reaching the proposed outcomes. Teachers who are aware and knowledgeable about the issues are capable of carrying out the necessary reforms with confidence, enthusiasm, and success. The professional development plan proposed by the writer used other successful models as a pattern. It promised enhancement of teacher participation, increased knowledge in educational issues, and transition from resistance and apathy to active involvement and collaboration.

Report of Action Taken

The writer carried out a three month implementation leading to the solution of the school's problem dealing with teacher non-involvement in school change. The writer's strategic implementation design consisted of three phases focusing on prioritization of needs and meeting the specified goals and objectives. Each phase involved four weeks of activities related to Staff Development. All members of the School community participated. The writer served as the central facilitator for the project. She entitled her plan "Let's Work Together" giving greatest priority to Shared Decision Making and collaborative effort.

The writer collected significant information for the realization of "Let's Work Together" from surveys and documentations. Originally, the writer planned dissemination of three surveys during the three month period to teachers. The approved tool was a lengthy survey designed by the writer's District. The length of the survey entailed time-consuming reading for teachers, time they did not have. In overcoming this roadblock, the writer used the survey twice, at the beginning and midpoint of the practicum period. The writer also documented log notes regarding changes in attitude regarding school reforms. She recorded on a checklist using the terms dissatisfied, satisfied, or no opinion. The writer documented class observations in her journal using a rubric scoring device of one to ten. The rubric measured use of innovative strategies and techniques in the classroom. The writer carefully identified the strategies used by each team. The writer observed teacher attitudes, student participation, reactions, and performance outcomes. The writer noted comments made by staff members related to school reform and change in her journal. The

writer replaced the third staff survey with a short form survey given only to team leaders. The writer and school administrators cooperatively designed the survey. This survey brought closure to the three month implementation of "Let's Work Together" by providing pertinent information on accomplishment of teacher involvement in school reforms. It also gave the writer ideas for improving and embellishing the practicum for future use.

The writer realized that change cannot happen in the classroom without support of parents, students, and community. This realization brought about an additional alteration to implementation. The writer disseminated a survey designed by the Local School Restructuring Team to students, parents and community members. The questions on the survey coincided with those on the teacher survey. Collaboration of the PTA, Local School Restructuring Team, and school Administration made it possible for survey distribution, collection, and review. The writer conducted the review. The intense data collection gave the writer and her team the necessary information for formulation of a successful professional development program strengthening teacher involvement in successful school reform.

Meetings with Stakeholders

The writer's strategic plan called for involvement of all school stakeholders in the new School Improvement Plan. Bi-monthly meetings with Administration, Teachers, Parents, and Students were part of the plan. Although the students were not in the Proposed Plan of Implementation, the writer included them as central stakeholders in the change process.

Their input related to programmatic change was crucial to the Professional Development Plan.

The writer designed her meetings creatively allowing participants active involvement in the change process. Each meeting included members of the teaching staff, one administrator, two parent representatives, and at least one community member. The writer scheduled each meeting at a different time taking into account the diverse schedules of the stakeholders. While teachers engaged in professional development activities, students worked in their classrooms. The writer's plan included student coverage, however changes became necessary. The original plan called for student coverage by the Instructional Assistants and available substitutes. Change of plans took place due to massive personnel cuts. Administrators and team leaders met and developed plans for alternative grouping. Professional development took place in team rather than whole school format during the school day. No more than two teams met at one time. The writer accomplished student coverage using available Instructional Assistants and volunteers.

The members attending the meeting expressed their concerns. They contributed information, and material related to school changes. The students were not present at the meetings, but parents and teachers expressed their opinions and concerns. Teachers distributed a short questionnaire to students before meetings. The teachers shared the responses with the group. During the three-month implementation period, the writer offered all teachers and administrators an opportunity to participate, voice concerns, and exchange ideas. Parents and community members selected representation amongst

themselves. In making certain that all stakeholders shared in the success and growth of the school the writer emphasized school community in the "learning organization."

At each meeting a volunteer recorder took precise minutes of all discussions. The minutes were word processed, copied, and disseminated to the entire staff within twenty-four hours. After the dissemination of the minutes, Team Leaders met with their colleagues discussing strategies for strengthening the school's instructional programs. The writer used data from the minutes as a measurement of teacher participation in the change process. Professional Development teams formed based on individual strengths of staff members. These Professional Development teams became the catalyst for future professional development programs of the school.

Professional Development Programs

The second phase of "Let's Work Together" involved the design of professional development activities providing exposure and training in the new initiatives adopted by the School Development Plan. The writer originally planned for three professional development workshops focusing on Infusion of Technology, Context of Learning, and Responsive Classroom techniques. After careful review of all surveys, discussions, minutes, and observations, need for immediate training in other reform initiatives was evident. The writer met with administrators and members of the Local School Restructuring Team in a special session. As a result, the writer added four additional training sessions in the three month period. The writer encountered time difficulties as more activities added to the original plan. She altered her strategic plan as she added more activities. In her plan she allotted time blocks for teacher preparation and review of

workshop evaluations. Before the worksessions, teachers received information exposing them to the material. Close team collaboration served as a time saving strategy. Using this strategy, the writer engaged teachers in actual workshop planning and presenting. Together with staff members, parents, and community members the writer discussed agendas, concerns, and effective strategies for empowering others. This strategy of team planning also went over and beyond the proposed plan of implementation. The writer restructured her meeting schedule and allowed Team Leaders and teacher presenters to meet on alternate days. This change demanded greater preparation, shared responsibility, and adherence to timeframe. The writer considered the challenges of limited time but focused on strong collaboration and communication for positive results.

The entire administrative and teaching staff of the school attended two of the seven sessions. The writer served as facilitator, and teachers presented concepts related to the Context of Learning, Responsive Classroom Techniques, and Reading and Mathematics strategies in connection to Whole Language Instruction. Teachers from all grade levels participated in a joint learning experience emphasizing inclusion in decision making factors. The teacher-presenters volunteered for the sharing experience. They assumed the responsibility of setting up their agenda, choosing their activities, and assembling handouts for the staff. These presentations involved use of video tape, overhead projections, activities and games, and question and answer periods. Teachers became involved as leaders and peer collaborators as they presented innovative concepts and strategies to their colleagues. The writer collected workshop evaluation forms at the conclusion of the sessions for assessment purposes.

The team designed five sessions. Team Leaders met with the writer and administrative team and decided the most crucial issues for additional development. The following were necessary and critical areas for improvement according to the School Development Plan:

- Multicultural Values
- Math/Science/Technology Initiative
- Continuous Progress/Outcome Based Education Assessment Techniques
- Parental Involvement

The Team Leaders with the assistance of their colleagues set up creative ways of carrying out the five sessions of professional development without disrupting student instructional time, or teacher planning time. The writer aligned her activities taking into account opportunities for teacher empowerment and choice. These opportunities included:

- Small group professional development scheduled and planned by teachers, administration, and the school's Collegial Associate.
- Full team meetings sharing ideas and information on the selected issues took place in formal and informal settings.
- Dissemination of material to all team members, and then following up through pair-share discussions (mentoring idea).
- Teachers chose to attend professional development activities most relevant to their needs

The teachers joined in the effort of sharing information and moving from a negative view of change to a positive one.

The writer and a team of five classroom teachers joined in setting up a technology infusion workshop as one of the five sessions. A proposal approved by administration allotted funds for the purchase of a video presentation from Tom Snyder publications. The members of this committee worked under the leadership of the computer specialist and music teacher learning how to effectively infuse technology into the classroom curriculum. The writer and her team met during non-instructional time planning for the workshop and its agenda. The school administration approved presentation of this one-hour workshop as part of a designated professional development day. The computer specialist and music teacher made arrangements for use of the city's main computer lab housed in the school. Teachers were able to experience hands-on learning on state-of-the-art technology. As a separate session on the same Professional Development Day 4 other teachers presented sample lesson units related to the Math/Science/ Technology initiative tying in the infusion of technology into the actual curriculum. The writer had seven teachers volunteer to be presenters of new programs, advocators of change.

The School's Collegial Associate Teacher and the writer co-presented an interactive workshop in two separate sessions, Elementary and Secondary on Outcome Based Education. The sessions were one hour each. Administrative support provided class coverage for students while teachers became exposed to the systemic introduced reform. Teachers received hand-outs for future reading that described OBE and compared it to Compentency Based Curriculum. The presenters discussed OBE pilot projects done throughout the City's schools and presented samples of student work from the writer's classroom pilot. The discussion and exposure to the new reform discussed changes for fall

implementation. The writer and Collegial Associate Teacher involved teachers in changes before actual implementation. At open forum sessions they informed teachers about proposed reforms allowing for open discussion, sharing of information, and opportunity for future involvement.

On-going training in reforms was a definite characteristic of the writer's plan. The final session scheduled and designed by the writer in her plan involved the school's Responsive Classroom and Continuous Progress programs. The writer and Collegial Associate Teacher of the School drafted an agenda, and six teachers designed a hands-on workshop focusing on these areas. The Pre-Kindergarten through third grade teachers worked together, and the fourth through eighth worked on a coordinate of the program entitled Vertical Teaming. Teachers actively participated as they learned about the components of the programs driving their classroom environment and assessment programs. Videotapes of model classrooms demonstrated successful implementation techniques giving teachers necessary confidence in understanding and buying into the mandated reforms. Collaborative effort was a major element of this professional development activity. The writer and Collegial Associate served as on-site facilitators rotating from the elementary session to the secondary. The teachers were the leaders.

The writer documented in a journal over the three-month implementation period. The notes served as a reflection of the implementation activities. She received copies of all correspondence and meeting notes from the Team Leaders, Administrators, and Committee Members.

The writer allowed for a half hour period designated for debriefing, and collection of evaluation forms after every meeting or activity. During debriefing session, participants voiced concerns, made comments, and evaluated activities. Using open forum discussions, the strong and weak points of the programs became evident. Considering the imminent needs, professional development plans changed accordingly. Team leaders received the results of the debriefing sessions and shared the information with team members.

Parental Involvement Related to Teacher Involvement

Through team consensus, the writer added parents and community members to the Professional Development plan. In this manner all members of the school community shared in bringing about acceptance of school reform. This too was an alteration from the writer's original practicum plan. From the very first week of the implementation, the writer realized that parents and community members played an intricate role in teacher performance, therefore including them was important. The writer incorporated parents and community into each phase of her practicum. The parents and community members served as members of the Professional Development Team. They worked with the writer collecting pertinent information related to school change. Parent reports presented at each meeting created a link between the most important school stakeholders, teachers and school community.

The writer added one more alteration to her plan. She facilitated one additional joint workshop in the final stage of her practicum for parents, teachers and community members. At this session the writer disseminated material informing the entire community about the school's reform initiatives. The writer shared data from the surveys and

distributed reading material regarding all the school's programs. The writer's last initiative emphasized collaboration and team work as components for acceptance and involvement in school reform movements. During the three-month period the writer involved all stakeholders of the school community in a variety of activities.

Professional Development Activities

During the three month implementation the writer's third phase involved devising interesting and useful activities enticing teachers to become involved members of reform. The writer chose relevant activities based on the causes, evidence, and data. The exciting and enticing activities included:

- Engaging teachers in activities promoting teacher as researcher.
- Teachers interacted during the professional development sessions with fellow colleagues and educational consultants.
- Writer collected curricula material relevant to the issues, compiled loose leaf notebooks, and disseminated to staff members.
- Hands-on sharing led to practice of innovative strategies.
- The use of technological means enhanced and enriched the learning experience. (Internet, On-line, Computer use, and diverse audio-visual equipment)
- Teachers learned new methods and strategies while working with their students.
- Teachers received administrative leave for visiting neighboring schools engaged in similar reform efforts.

"Let's Work Together" dealt with teacher's non-involvement in school change. Thirty-five teachers participated along with four members of the administrative team. Community

members and parents joined the school staff in worksessions and discussions. Six members served as liaisons to the Restructuring Team. As part of the implementation action plan, the Local School Restructuring Team invited interested parents and community members to meetings. At these meetings they received relevant and pertinent information about their children's classroom programs.

Chapter V

Results, Discussion, Recommendations, and Dissemination

The goal of this practicum was to increase teacher involvement in school reform movements through active participation in professional development activities. The writer's plan, "Let's Work Together" focused on the replacement of resistance and apathy. Its goal was growth in interest and satisfaction.

This public elementary and middle school, the practicum site, contained 35 teachers. The solution strategy involved designing and implementing a professional development program. This practicum focused on collaboration, support for school reforms, and dissemination of resources for professional growth.

Results

The writer shares the outcomes of her practicum involving teachers as active change agents in the processes of the school.

1. Outcome #1: Ongoing observations and discussions will indicate that dissatisfaction and complaints will decrease from 9 out of 10 incidence to only 5 out of 10.

Outcome #1 was met. The writer noted incidences of teacher dissatisfaction and satisfaction on a comparative checklist (see Table #1). The writer documented three separate school reform activities. Table #1 documents by month the total number of incidences of dissatisfaction, satisfaction, or no opinion. The writer successfully met her predicted outcome and even exceeded her original expectations.

Table #1

Incidence of teacher satisfaction related to school reform

February, March, and May 1996

	Number of Teachers	Dissatisfied Teachers	Satisfied Teachers	No Opinion
Feb., 1996	35	31	4	-
March, 1996	35	20	15	-
May, 1996	35	12	22	1

2. Outcome #2: Minutes from meetings and open forums will indicate that one out of two teachers are now participating in the change process in comparison to one out of four cited in the evidence.

Outcome #2 was successfully met. In February only eight teachers participated in change process activities. Eight out of thirty-five was equivalent to only one out of four cited in the evidence. At completion, May 1996 seventeen teachers participated in activities making the outcome of one out of two a reality.

The writer recorded in a journal record (see Appendix A) and checklist (see Appendix C). She noted teachers who participated in change process activities at the beginning of the Practicum (February) and those who joined in the effort by the end of the Practicum (May). Figure 1 illustrated the writer's documentation of teacher interest in school

programs. Figure 1 covered the writer's implementation months, February to May.

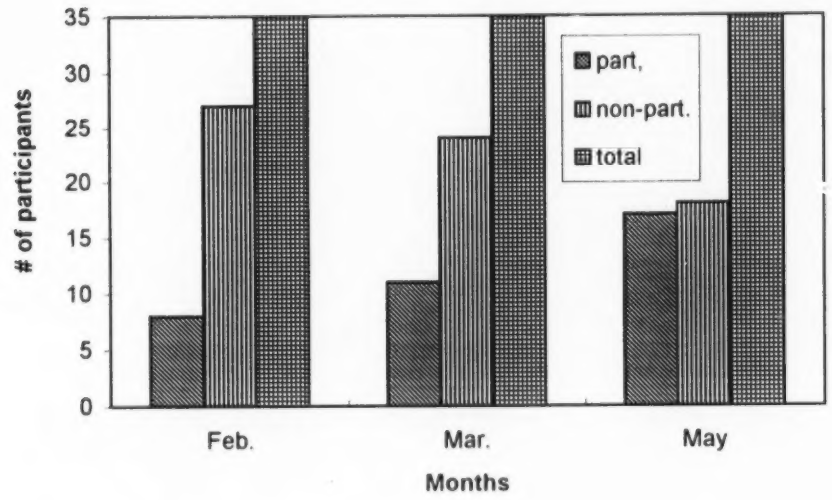

Figure 1: Progression of teacher participation

Part. = participants in school reform

Non-part. = non-participants in school reform

total = total # of teachers

3. Outcome #3: The results of the final survey will indicate increase in satisfaction and participation and evidence of decrease of dissatisfaction and resistance. The expectation is that one out of two teachers will participate in the implementation of new techniques and strategies.

Outcome #3 was successfully met. The writer identified five new techniques and strategies that teachers expected to implement. She recorded teacher participation on a checklist (see Appendix B) as she did on-site observations. The strategies observed were

those presented in professional development sessions over the three month practicum period. Table #2 validated increase in satisfaction through participation and implementation of new techniques and strategies.

Table #2

Teacher participation in implementation of new techniques and strategies

May 1996

STRATEGY	TEAM	# OF TEACHERS	# IMPLEMENTING
Whole Language	4 teams	35 teachers	20
Responsive Classroom	4 teams	35 teachers	8
Continuous Progress	2 teams	14 teachers	7
Vertical Teaming	2 teams	14 teachers	7
Technology Infusion in the curriculum	4 teams	35 teachers	23

4. Outcome #4: Documentation of teacher and staff involvement in Local School Restructuring Team efforts will indicate growth in interest and participation. The writer predicts that 30 out of 35 surveys disseminated at the conclusion of the practicum will return in comparison to 3 out of 35 in the beginning.

Outcome #4 was met beyond the expectations of the writer. The writer noted survey return on a checklist in her journal (see Appendix C). The first dissemination of the school survey brought poor returns and disappointment for the writer. The writer disseminated

the identical survey at the beginning of April, one month before the end of the practicum implementation. The results indicated a drastic growth in teacher involvement and participation. In Table #3 the writer discloses the successful outcome of her practicum promoting growth in interest and participation of teachers toward school reform.

Table #3

Teacher survey responses

February 1996 and April 1996

	Total # of surveys	February response	April response
Survey #1	35	3	
Survey #2	35		32

Discussion

To reach the expected outcomes of this practicum, the writer reconstructed the professional development program of the school involving everyone in the school community. The problem she dealt with was poor teacher interest and participation in school change. As the writer developed the concept of building teacher involvement she found that setting up workshops and developing handouts was not the solution. The practicum that started out dealing with increasing teacher participation and interest in school change ended up including stakeholders of the entire school community. Their involvement made it possible for successful implementation and solution of the problem. The Let's Work Together Model of the writer brought about close collaboration and cooperation of people that had never worked as a team. The outcome of the practicum

validated the examples cited in the extensive literature review of the writer. The writer strongly emphasized empowering staff members allowing them acclimation and responsibility in the reform movements. This idea paralleled with the model of Quaglia and Brown (1994) referred to in the literature.

The writer successfully met the outcomes through the use of more strategies than those originally predicted. The writer's plan of action stated a realization for inclusion of parents, students, and community members. Collection of data from these sources allowed conscientious and careful focus on the needs of the school as stated by all stakeholders. The writer linked the outcomes of the parental, student, and community surveys with those of the teacher surveys. The writer amazingly found definite connections in their statements. All expressed concern regarding professional development programs for successful school reform. All stakeholders placed the student as the central focus, and requested action in bringing the best to the student. The practicum vision was total commitment to teachers through active involvement and participation. This active participation transpired into better quality educational programs.

The writer became aware of many characteristics of teacher involvement and change as the practicum progressed. The writer attributed her successful outcomes to open communication, alleviation of misinformation about programs, and on-going interaction. The writer respected the views of Harvey and Drolet (1994) who insisted that asking rather than telling teachers what to do brings about better results. The writer asked for volunteers to present the work sessions. In this manner, teachers became researchers and innovators. They took on roles of leadership outside their classrooms. Because time was

of prime essence, the writer made certain that she did not take time from the children's learning experiences, or from precious planning time. Teachers accepted meeting during creative meeting times:

- On the playground
- In the lunchroom
- After school
- Before school
- Over the telephone

The team leaders cooperated and played a major leadership role in the coordination of the Professional Development activities of Let's Work Together. Team leaders undertook the responsibility of activity designing and scheduling teacher release time.

In the implementation phase of Let's Work Together there were many implications. There were considerations made about disseminating surveys, conducting interviews, and collecting data from classroom observation. The writer noted disappointment at the return of only three surveys at the first dissemination. After meeting with members of the Staff and Local School Restructuring Committee the writer discovered that there were reasons for the dissatisfaction. Teachers stated that the survey took time to fill out due to its length and detail. They did not have ample time for completion, set it aside, and forgot to submit. Taking these concerns into consideration, the writer and school administration followed the altered strategy of the Plan of Action. The writer disseminated the same survey in April, one month before completion of the practicum. Team leaders served as data collectors. They disseminated surveys, collected them two days later, and turned them in

to the writer for review. The significant response was an implication of teachers working together. Teachers cooperated with the team leaders rather than the administrators.

The writer found that conducting data collection in small rather than large group setting brought about better results. The positive response was overwhelming as teachers worked with teachers in small team worksessions. The writer prepared loose leaf notebooks with programmatic information. Team leaders disseminated these notebooks to all team members. The writer made sure teachers had their information at least two days subsequent to their session. The teachers worked collaboratively exchanging ideas, voicing concerns, and actually slowly buying into the programs. At the work sessions, teachers used the material provided by the writer. The material became a part of the hands-on worksession. Teachers reviewed relevant material as a group without taking extra time from their valuable schedules. The writer noted increased interest and participation of teachers in these worksessions that ultimately will lead to buy in of school reforms.

A welcome and unexpected outcome was the commitment of 21 teachers for one particular reform. The writer introduced Math, Science and Technology infusion into the curriculum tying it into the Performance Based initiative. A first grade teacher immediately became interested, attended further workshops and as a result became a change agent for the school on that initiative. The writer claimed this as a success of the practicum, since the teacher initially had been uninvolved, and became an involved leader of a major thrust. As a result of her involvement the 21 teachers signed up for the forthcoming summer citywide institute.

The writer enlightened teachers about innovative strategies and ideas. She correlated her plans with Dilworth and Imig (1995) who emphasized that teachers comprehending content of the courses taught in their classrooms were more confident and successful. Through the diverse practicum activities the writer accomplished:

- Building a solid basis of trust within the school environment
- Development of collaboration and communication strategies
- Increase in interest of new innovative teaching methods and strategies
- A renewed interest in the educational arena through shared decision making
- Increased teacher and parent participation in the school's reform movements
- Increased comprehension of the classroom content related to the new strategies

These accomplishments were integral parts of the outcomes met. As teachers recognized the value of accepting parental and student input, participation and enthusiasm for change increased. Teachers that in the first oral interview claimed dissatisfaction with everything, grew to understand the reasons for their dissatisfaction. This understanding led them into challenging activities with their peers displacing dissatisfaction with satisfaction.

The inclusion of teachers in the implementation process increased professional esteem in the writer's school just as it did for Maeroff (1993) in his setting. Both the writer and he insisted that collegiality and bonding of the staff leads to stronger desire for success. The writer conducted classroom observations and noted use of strategies and signs of satisfaction. These were other outcomes resulting from collegiality:

- Teams found time for peer planning

- Teachers worked on projects as teams such as multicultural week activities in May and team themes.

These are just a few of the concrete examples the writer noted in her journal of classroom implementation resulting from professional development. Obstacles of time, frustration, and misinformation were not the main focus of dissatisfaction on the second survey. Instead, student achievement, class activities and desire for more development took their place. As a result of team workshops, the writer noted signs of teacher desire for leadership roles. One teacher assumed the chairmanship of the Multicultural Week festivities. Teachers from every team joined her committee, met after school, and coordinated everything including the finances. The writer's emphasis on School Based Management became ingrained in the hearts of her colleagues. She witnessed connections between her model and that of Sirotnik and Clark (1988) which focused on strong teacher involvement in decision making regarding school programs.

The writer documented success of Multicultural Week due to teacher leadership. She simultaneously accepted that reaching this pinnacle of success was not easy. Teachers met twice a week after school, did not always agree, but worked hard in consensus building skills. The teachers worked hard at achieving cooperative team work instead of focusing on the difficulties and disagreements. Teachers that noted total dissatisfaction in February when interviewed, now turned around and contributed their knowledge and skills to the school's programs. This was truly a positive sign forward.

The writer met obstacles as she implemented the practicum. School budget restraints limited the number of personnel for teacher release time. The writer met the outcomes of

this practicum through the use of alternate schedules and contributions of volunteers. The success of the practicum set precedents for future programs. This was in itself an unexpected outcome.

Another obstacle was that requirements of the school did not parallel with the available equipment and materials in the classroom. Teachers noted strong dissatisfaction on all surveys and interviews because state-of-the art technological equipment was not available for use. This practicum could not guarantee nor furnish the equipment, but the Tom Snyder workshop in the school's main Computer Center provided additional knowledge and tools for teachers. Teachers coordinated and presented the workshop. The workshop promoted an interest for teacher growth in the field of technology, and changed the way teachers felt. The writer noted a switch in teachers' tones from a what do we care attitude, to even if we do not have it; we will know how to use it whenever we get it. The writer interprets these remarks as positive outcomes of the practicum objectives.

As the writer set out to work with professional enhancement the literature guided her in the development of her strategies. Although her emphasis was on teacher involvement and participation, growth became evident in the parental and student sectors as well. The writer realized that in an endeavor of this type success happens if all stakeholders feel satisfaction. The writer included dissemination of surveys to parents, students, and community into the timeframe as the practicum proceeded. It was these surveys, however, that brought the whole true school picture to the writer. The use of all information brought about one more dimension to the practicum. The final worksession set up by the writer and the school PTA was unique, because teachers and parents shared the world of

the classroom. Its open forum brought about fruitful discussion regarding needs, concerns, and doubts. Bringing everyone together was a useful tool for future planning.

The writer's practicum of involving teachers as active participants in the change processes of the school became a reality. In the three month implementation period the writer became actively involved with parents, students, community members, and colleagues. The practicum's goals set out to improve the school's classroom programs through the implementation of a professional development program emphasizing collaboration and teacher training. The successful outcomes of the practicum indicated to the writer that on-going training and empowerment of teachers increase professional satisfaction, and ease toward reform acceptance.

The results of the practicum proved that for decrease of dissatisfaction and complaints the writer used many strategies. Dissatisfaction does not change to satisfaction because teachers attend a workshop. The workshops designed by the writer were sessions of exposure, followed by hands-on, on-going activities. These workshops were the catalysts for teachers becoming change agents like the first grade teacher and the Math, Science, and Technology effort.

. The writer devised methods of reaching her colleagues encouraging them to become active participants in change processes. The innovative worksessions designed for teacher interaction and learning brought about the participation of teachers in the school's most crucial programs.

Recommendations:

The writer made the following recommendations for future use of the model:

1. The writer suggested that this model be used in the school setting for a full year allowing time for program expansion, and further development of the staff. The full year extension would promote the writer's goals for the entire School Development Plan.
2. The writer recommends use of video taping for future assessment of the model. Educators interested in sharing this model could view the videos and revise their plans accordingly. The videos when presented to uninvolved teachers would be a means of demonstrating programmatic success urging involvement and interest.
3. The writer suggests that interested educators could add another dimension to this model, a teacher resource center. The teacher resource center would contain information on all reform efforts taking place in the school. This center would give uninvolved teachers opportunities for research and exploration on their own time.

Dissemination:

The writer shared her practicum model with her school administration and colleagues. Interest in the writer's practicum prompted administration and staff requests for further use of the model. The writer plans presentations of her professional development model emphasizing teacher involvement at School and District workshops. She also will write journal articles about uninvolved teachers in school reform movements. She plans disseminating articles to Educational Leadership and Phi Delta Kappan. The writer will also share her practicum model with the Center for Systemic Change in her District promoting teacher empowerment and involvement in school reforms.

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APPENDIX A

JOURNAL RECORD ENTRY FORM

Appendix A

Journal Record Entry Form

Date - Place of observation -- subjects observed	Notations

APPENDIX B

TEACHER PARTICIPATION CHECKLIST FORM

Appendix B

Teacher Participation Checklist Form

Strategy or program observed	Teacher(s)/Team	Notations	Rubric (0-10)

APPENDIX C

SURVEY DOCUMENTATION

(DISSEMINATION AND RETURN)

Appendix C

Survey documentation

Dissemination and return

Teacher's Name/Team	Survey # and Date	Completed and Returned	Notations